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Edward Hester to Sarah Bracher, n.d. [2 May 1858]

My dear Sarah

Theodosia received your letter yesterday making it only [?24] days since written which appeared pretty quick travelling this the 2<sup>d</sup> May it has commenced rainy and blowing for the first time this season and it blows so hard that we have been quite alarmed I have undertaken to write you a little scrawl this evening Sunday because I have very little leisure to do so any other time but I have nothing particularly good to communicate we are all pretty well in health I do not think I have made any progress for some time past as there seems to be a general depression all over the world but as a matter of course more so in Western Australia I have my station on the Blackwood with 120 head of cattle & have 7 or 8 Horses of one kind and another If I can keep them for a few years I will sell off and leave the colony for I feel that we are little better off than the Convicts I suppose when I leave here and go any where else I shall have to turn Farmer or something of that kind as I have and may have a large family to keep I could not do so in a Town

I am sorry to hear that our Brothers do not do better it is strange out of so many that none should be fortunate I often feel afraid of leaving the manner that I have of getting a living without knowing what other plan I should have It is all my little ones that makes it more difficult for me to decide what is best for me to do, however I shall never give up the hope I must wait until times are good if ever they are here and perhaps property will be of some value but to sell now would [be] to give it away

I was telling Theodosia that if I could manage it I would pay you a visit next year as communication is so certain now to what it was when I visited Melbourne before. I should very much like to see you all does Fanny recollect my coming to Melbourne do you think she would know me I wrote I had paid Roberts and Letitias passage to Melbourne as that have been a great trouble to me I have sank for him above £300

and only lately had a little back in the shape of cheese and butter made from my own cattle that I paid him for keeping, I often feel very low spirited in consequence of the times being so bad and the impossibility of getting money from those who owe it me I almost think some times that I shall go cranky as I my self owe the money to others, and besides many things that I could sell I am without as I cannot get them when short of money and consequently do less business than I otherwise would

Everet & Gibbs made a smash long ago and Everet is carrying on in a small way himself I believe I must have told you the particulars in a former note, I am sorry to say that I do not think that F & Anderton are improving their fortunes I do not think they ever can on the Canning, they might and I believe would do well any where else, I shall feel satisfied in future if I can get a very little more than a living and keep my stock that is my sole aim

Our children are often asking about their aunts uncles & cousins it will not be very long before Frances will be able to write to her cousin all our children except the baby go to school Mrs Brown the Clergymans wife keeps a school so that our two eldest go to her we send a fresh child to school every year or nearly so

If some of their uncles would make their fortunes and keep single and then there might be a chance of their having something left them some day

Thedasia is writing to you so that my note is only a little private chat over the *water* It is a very long time since we had a letter from you I think we have both written since we had one from you we have received papers several times since I suppose you are aware that we have six children and consequently we a great deal to support us as we live I often think well if we can only get over this year we shall do better an other one but every year seems to bring its difficulties I every now and then fearfully in debt and then I have all the anxiety of making up the amounts and the worse the times the more pressing people are little thinking that if they are bad with them they are also with me It is a wonderful thing but I really think that things are safer

and that there are less robberies here although a Convict Colony than there would be with the same number of Free people but I suppose it is because there are no means of their disposing with things that might be stolen When you write again let us know how Mr Steward is doing and Thos Turner also as for this part of the world every one seems about the same Give my kind remembrances to George and my love to Fanny and the other little ones and remember me kindly to all those that were my acquaintances and believe me my dear Sarah to remain your affectionate Brother

E G Hester